

# **AIR QUALITY PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH STRATEGY UPDATE**

**Rural Advisory Council  
September 27, 2019**

# ACTION REQUESTED

No action is requested at this time. This item is for presentation and discussion.

- Air quality public education and outreach strategy update

## PREVIOUS ACTION

No previous action.

# BACKGROUND

On June 9, 2017 after an RFP process, NOACA awarded a contract to Markey Group. NOACA has worked with Markey Group over the past two years to develop:

1. Air Quality Public Education and Outreach Strategy
  - Goals, objectives, metrics, and action
  - Will guide implementation of NOACA's Regional Strategic Plan and help bring the region into compliance with EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)
2. Communication Plan
  - How NOACA will use communication tools to support the strategy



# BACKGROUND

The purpose of this project is to develop a strategy to provide information and generate awareness of outdoor air quality *problems and solutions* in Northeast Ohio.





# BACKGROUND

While NE Ohio's air quality has improved since the 1970 Clean Air Act, portions of the region continue to exceed EPA standards for multiple pollutants in 2018

- Standards exceeded for ozone and sulfur dioxide
- Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) – most deadly pollutants – have declined by a smaller margin

Transportation (mobile) emissions have emerged as primary pollutants

- Single-occupant vehicle (SOV) rate in NOACA region has increased over the last decade to 82% in 2017, higher than the national average

## NE Ohio counties exceeding EPA standards

### *Ozone*

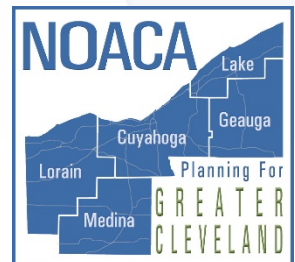
1. Cuyahoga
2. Geauga
3. Lake

### *Sulfur Dioxide*

1. Lake

### *Carbon Monoxide, Nitrogen Dioxide, Lead, & Particulate Matter*

None

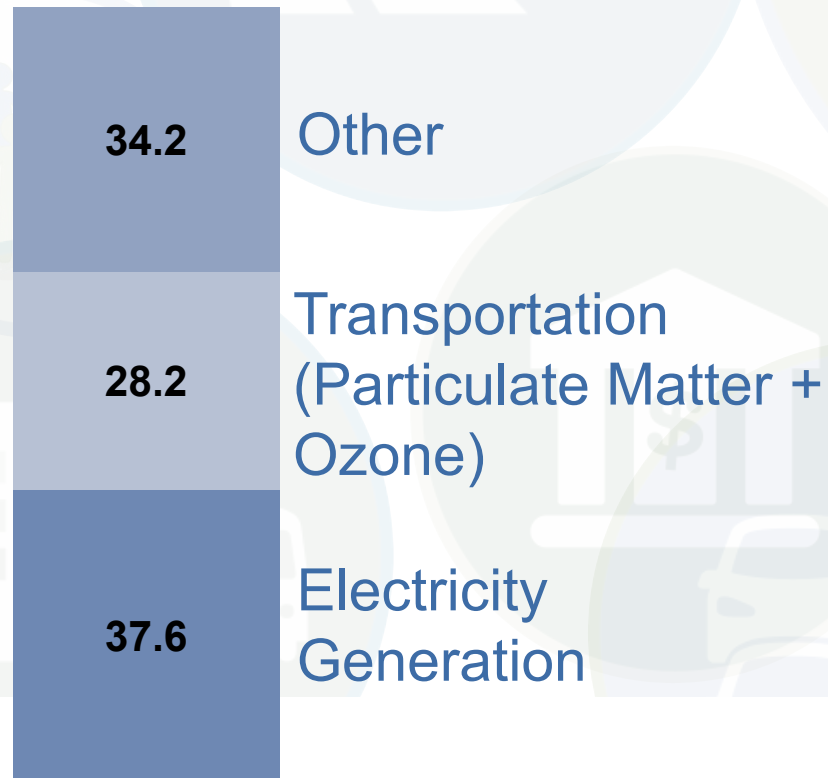


# BACKGROUND

## NE Ohio deaths due to air pollution

**Total deaths 1,363**

2005 Cleveland metro area study



Mobile emissions contribute to respiratory disease, heart disease, strokes, pre- and neo-natal conditions, cognitive issues, and other health conditions, resulting in missed days of school and work, and higher medical costs (especially children and the elderly)

- 28% of air-pollution related deaths in NE Ohio (2<sup>nd</sup> largest driver)
- Road transportation air pollution in Cleveland caused more premature deaths than homicide or traffic crashes



# BACKGROUND

## PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH STRATEGY MISSION STATEMENT:

NOACA will educate the community about the region's air quality challenges and the linkages among air quality, transportation, land use, and public health.

NOACA will empower individuals and organizations to improve air quality, in particular through increased use of alternate transportation modes.

NOACA will advocate for public policies that provide greater transportation choice, reduce mobile emissions, benefit public health, create economic opportunity, and enhance quality of life in Northeast Ohio.



# BACKGROUND

Markey Group and NOACA staff have obtained input via:

- Public focus groups and meetings
- Market feedback tools (informal surveys)
- Market research
- NOACA subcommittee and advisory council meetings





# BACKGROUND

Consultant submitted semi-final versions of both documents earlier this year

Both documents underwent extensive peer review



**PEER REVIEW**

# BACKGROUND

## Strategy Document Outline – Action Plan

### Goal #1: Increase awareness of the air quality challenge in Northeast Ohio

- Promote awareness of air quality challenge in Northeast Ohio
- Measure Northeast Ohio resident awareness of air quality challenge

# BACKGROUND

Goal #2: Educate the community on the causes and potential solutions for the air quality challenge in Northeast Ohio

- Implement education campaigns to foster conviction, develop skills, provide role modeling opportunities, and promote behavior change
- Establish NOACA as a leading resource for air quality information and guidance in Northeast Ohio

# BACKGROUND

Goal #3: Empower employers, healthcare providers, and educational institutions with resources to be air quality champions

- Promote Gohio Commute and Commuter Choice Awards as employer/employee transportation strategies
- Pilot consulting support for local employers with local transportation management needs
- Develop and/or adapt content (brochures, videos, fact sheets) for healthcare providers and education institutions to distribute. Content should tell the reader why clean air is important and what they can do to help clean the air
- Meet regularly with hospital, healthcare, and school leaders to share content, encourage distribution and address concerns



# BACKGROUND

Goal #4: Promote a culture at NOACA that better integrates air quality with other programs

- Further develop a culture that promotes air quality at NOACA, so that NOACA can be a leader in role modeling good clean air behaviors

# BACKGROUND

Goal #5: Promote strategies outside of NOACA to change transportation and infrastructure policy and increase clean air funding

- Plant the seeds for a potential future public-private partnership
- Provide data to support the case for increased funding for expanded alternative transportation infrastructure
- Drive down the single occupancy vehicle rate by eliminating the barrier “Action for cleaner air is not convenient for me”
- Pursue transportation reform by educating and collaborating with city, regional, state, and federal government agencies and programs

# BACKGROUND

## DRAFT COMMUNICATION PLAN

### Audiences:

- General public
- Businesses and organizations (employers, healthcare providers, religious and civic institutions, and schools)
- Media
- NOACA staff and board
- Government leaders/elected officials

**WHO  
IS YOUR  
AUDIENCE**



# BACKGROUND

## BEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR NOACA TO REACH AUDIENCES:

- Owned media (website, NOACA social media channels, email, and blogs)
- Earned media (conferences, media relations)
- Paid media (social media and paid ads)
- Partnerships (collaborating with other organizations, sponsorships)





# BACKGROUND

## COMMUNICATION PLAN – KEY POINTS

- Create a content calendar to coordinate messaging
- Customize content for different audiences
- Partner with others for cost-effective opportunities
- Create budget for paid ads and work with a media firm for content and ad placement
- Create sequential content (immediate, mid-term, and long range) to help the public understand and take action on air quality information



# BACKGROUND

## Specialized Mobility Search Function

- Additional functionality within Gohio Commute platform
- Will provide quick and easy search for specialized mobility providers, focusing on audience of seniors, individuals with disabilities and their families/caregivers
- Search by need criteria

## Current Status

- Partnering with MORPC, amending contract with RideAmigos
- Version for testing environment took place in February 2019
- NOACA staff collected detailed specialized transportation provider information
- RideAmigos currently uploading information
- Site testing to begin soon

# NEXT STEPS

## Advisory Council input and assistance requested regarding:

- Survey community to create a user-friendly definition of clean air and measure air quality awareness
- Identify areas in which communities may benefit from air quality education
- Identify community specific strategies for the most effective distribution of information
- Identify potential candidates or communities to implement idle reduction education
- Identify potential candidates to assist with promotion of Gohio Commute – specialized mobility feature – and to participate in the annual Commuter Choice Awards
- Identify the best way to disseminate Air Quality Advisories and promote positive actions to take on ozone action days
- Any other ways your organization play a role in in NOACA's air quality strategy?

# NEXT STEPS

- Begin implementation of the Air Quality Public Education and Outreach Strategy and Communication Plan
- Update Rural Advisory Council on progress as needed





NOACA will **STRENGTHEN** regional cohesion, **PRESERVE** existing infrastructure, and **BUILD** a sustainable multimodal transportation system to **SUPPORT** economic development and **ENHANCE** quality of life in Northeast Ohio.

